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Title 49 —Transportation

Subtitle B —Other Regulations Relating to Transportation

Chapter V —National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation

Part 577 —Defect and Noncompliance Notification

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30102, 30103, 30116-121, 30166; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.95 and 49 CFR 501.8.

Source: 41 FR 56816, Dec. 30, 1976, unless otherwise noted.

§ 577.5 Notification pursuant to a manufacturer's decision.

- (a) When a manufacturer of motor vehicles or replacement equipment determines that any motor vehicle or item of replacement equipment produced by the manufacturer contains a defect that relates to motor vehicle safety, or fails to conform to an applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standard, or the manufacturer files a defect or noncompliance information report under 49 CFR part 573, the manufacturer shall provide notification in accordance with § 577.7(a), unless the manufacturer is exempted by the Administrator (pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) or 30120(h)) from giving such notification. The notification shall contain the information specified in this section. The information required by paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section shall be presented in the form and order specified. The information required by paragraphs (d) through (h) of this section may be presented in any order. Except as authorized by the Administrator, the manufacturer shall submit a copy of its proposed owner notification letter, including any provisions or attachments related to reimbursement, to NHTSA's Recall Management Division (NVS-215) no fewer than five (5) Federal Government business days before it intends to begin mailing it to owners. The manufacturer shall mark the outside of each envelope in which it sends an owner notification letter with a notation that includes the phrase "SAFETY RECALL NOTICE," all in capital letters and in a type that is larger than that used in the address section, and is also distinguishable from the other type in a manner other than size. It shall also imprint on the outside of this envelope a label in accordance with § 577.14. Except where the format of the envelope has been previously approved by NHTSA's Recall Management Division (NVS-215), each manufacturer must submit the envelope format it intends to use to that division at least five (5) Federal Government business days before mailing the notification to owners. Submission of envelopes and proposed owner notification letters shall be made by the means identified in 49 CFR 573.9. Notification sent to an owner whose address is in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico shall be written in both English and Spanish.
- (b) At the top of the notification, there must be the statement "IMPORTANT SAFETY RECALL," in all capital letters and in a type size that is larger than that used in the remainder of the letter. Then immediately below, for vehicle recalls, there must be the statement "This notice applies to your vehicle, (manufacturer to insert VIN for the particular vehicle)." If VIN placement is not possible in this location, the VIN must then be placed in another conspicuous location within the notification. Immediately below the foregoing, there must be the opening statement: "This notice is sent to you in accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act."
- (c) Whichever of the following statements is appropriate:
- (1) "(Manufacturer's name or division) has decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in (identified motor vehicles, in the case of notification sent by a motor vehicle manufacturer; identified replacement equipment, in the case of notification sent by a replacement equipment manufacturer);" or

- (2) “(Manufacturer's name or division) has decided that (identified motor vehicles, in the case of notification sent by a motor vehicle manufacturer; identified replacement equipment, in the case of notification sent by a replacement equipment manufacturer) fail to conform to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. (number and title of standard).”
- (d) When the manufacturer determines that the defect or noncompliance may not exist in each such vehicle or item of replacement equipment, he may include an additional statement to that effect.
- (e) A clear description of the defect or noncompliance, which shall include—
 - (1) An identification of the vehicle system or particular item(s) of motor vehicle equipment affected.
 - (2) A description of the malfunction that may occur as a result of the defect or noncompliance. The description of a noncompliance with an applicable standard shall include, in general terms, the difference between the performance of the noncomplying vehicle or item of replacement equipment and the performance specified by the standard;
 - (3) A statement of any operating or other conditions that may cause the malfunction to occur; and
 - (4) A statement of the precautions, if any, that the owners should take to reduce the chance that the malfunction will occur before the defect or noncompliance is remedied.
- (f) An evaluation of the risk to motor vehicle safety reasonably related to the defect or noncompliance.
 - (1) When vehicle crash is a potential occurrence, the evaluation shall include whichever of the following is appropriate:
 - (i) A statement that the defect or noncompliance can cause vehicle crash without prior warning; or
 - (ii) A description of whatever prior warning may occur, and a statement that if this warning is not heeded, vehicle crash can occur.
 - (2) When vehicle crash is not the potential occurrence, the evaluation must include a statement indicating the general type of injury to occupants of the vehicle, or to persons outside the vehicle, that can result from the defect or noncompliance, and a description of whatever prior warning may occur.
- (g) A statement of measures to be taken to remedy the defect or noncompliance, in accordance with paragraph (g)(1) or (g)(2) of this section, whichever is appropriate.
 - (1) When the manufacturer is required by the Act to remedy the defect or noncompliance without charge, or when he will voluntarily so remedy in full conformity with the Act, he shall include—
 - (i) A statement that he will cause such defect to be remedied without charge, and whether such remedy will be by repair, replacement, or refund of the purchase price (in the case of remedy of a vehicle, less depreciation).
 - (ii) The earliest date on which the defect or noncompliance will be remedied without charge. In the case of remedy by repair, this date shall be the earliest date on which the manufacturer reasonably expects that dealers or other service facilities will receive necessary parts and instructions. The manufacturer shall specify the last date, if any, on which he will remedy tires without charge.
 - (iii) In the case of remedy by repair through the manufacturer's dealers or other service facilities:
 - (A) A general description of the work involved in repairing the defect or noncompliance; and

- (B) The manufacturer's estimate of the time reasonably necessary to perform the labor required to correct the defect or noncompliance.
- (iv) In the case of remedy by repair through service facilities other than those of the manufacturer or its dealers:
 - (A) The name and part number of each part must be added, replaced, or modified;
 - (B) A description of any modifications that must be made to existing parts, which shall also be identified by name and part number;
 - (C) Information as to where needed parts will be available;
 - (D) A detailed description (including appropriate illustrations) of each step required to correct the defect or noncompliance;
 - (E) The manufacturer's estimate of the time reasonably necessary to perform the labor required to correct the defect or noncompliance; and
 - (F) The manufacturer's recommendations of service facilities where the owner should have the repairs performed.
- (v) In the case of remedy by replacement, a description of the motor vehicle or item of replacement equipment that the manufacturer will provide as a replacement for the defective or noncomplying vehicle or equipment.
- (vi) In the case of a remedy of a vehicle by refund of purchase price, the method or basis for the manufacturer's assessment of depreciation.
- (vii) A statement informing the owner that he or she may submit a complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE., Washington, DC 20590; or call the toll-free Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236 (TTY: 1-800-424-9153); or go to <http://www.safercar.gov>, if the owner believes that:
 - (A) The manufacturer, distributor, or dealer has failed or is unable to remedy the defect or noncompliance without charge.
 - (B) The manufacturer has failed or is unable to remedy the defect or noncompliance without charge—
 - (1) (In the case of motor vehicles or items of replacement equipment, other than tires) within a reasonable time, which is not longer than 60 days in the case of repair after the owner's first tender to obtain repair following the earliest repair date specified in the notification, unless the period is extended by Administrator.
 - (2) (In the case of tires) after the date specified in the notification on which replacement tires will be available.
- (2) When the manufacturer is not required to remedy the defect or noncompliance without charge and he will not voluntarily so remedy, the statement shall include—
 - (i) A statement that the manufacturer is not required by the Act to remedy without charge.
 - (ii) A statement of the extent to which the manufacturer will voluntarily remedy, including the method of remedy and any limitations and conditions imposed by the manufacturer on such remedy.

(iii) The manufacturer's opinion whether the defect or noncompliance can be remedied by repair. If the manufacturer believes that repair is possible, the statement shall include the information specified in paragraph (g)(1)(iv) of this section, except that;

(A) The statement required by paragraph (g)(1)(iv)(A) of this section shall also indicate the suggested list price of each part.

(B) The statement required by paragraph (g)(1)(iv)(C) of this section shall also indicate the manufacturer's estimate of the date on which the parts will be generally available.

(h) Any lessor who receives a notification of a determination of a safety-related defect or noncompliance pertaining to any leased motor vehicle shall send a copy of such notice to the lessee as prescribed by § 577.7(a)(2)(iv). This requirement applies to both initial and follow-up notifications, but does not apply where the manufacturer has notified a lessor's lessees directly.

(Authority: Secs. 108, 112, and 119, Pub. L. 89-563; 80 Stat. 718; secs. 102, 103, and 104, Pub. L. 93-492, 88 Stat. 1470 (15 U.S.C. 1397, 1401, 1408, and 1411-1420); delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50)

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